

**Application No. 09/934310**  
**Page 5**

**Amendment**  
**Attorney Docket No. S63.2N-8429-US04**

**Amendments To The Claims:**

Claims 1-33 (*Canceled*)

Claim 34. (*Currently Amended*) A stent having a first end, an opposing second end, and a longitudinal length, the stent comprising:

a plurality of annular elements, each annular element having a compressed state and an expanded state; and  
at least a portion of the stent having a tapered configuration in the expanded state, the taper defining a relative difference in diameter between a portion of the stent closer to the first end and a portion of the stent closer to the second end, at least some of the taper traversing a portion of the longitudinal length where the annular elements are of substantially equal width; wherein the first and second ends have different degrees of flexibility and have different diameters ; and wherein the stent is cut from a tube.

Claim 35. (*Previously Presented*) The stent of claim 34, wherein each annular element comprises a plurality of alternating stents and apices connected to each other to form a substantially annular configuration, and wherein the stent further includes connecting members that are connected to the apices of the adjacent annular members.

Claim 36. (*Cancelled*)

Claim 37. (*Previously Presented*) The stent of claim 34 wherein the diameter of the stent increases from a first diameter at the first end to a second greater diameter at the second end.

Claim 38. (*Cancelled*)

Claim 39. (*Cancelled*)

*Application No. 09/934310*  
*Page 6*

*Amendment*  
*Attorney Docket No. S63.2N-8429-US04*

Claim 40. (*Cancelled*)

Claim 41. (*Cancelled*)

Claim 42. (*Currently Amended*) A stent having a first end, an opposing second end, and a longitudinal length, the stent comprising:

a plurality of interconnected annular elements, each annular element having a compressed state and an expanded state; wherein at least a portion of the stent has a tapered configuration in the expanded state;

the tapered configuration defining a difference in diameter between a portion of the stent closer to the first end and a portion of the stent closer to the second end, at least some of the tapered configuration occurring along a portion of the longitudinal length where the annular elements are of substantially equal width;

and wherein the first and second

ends have different degrees of flexibility and have different diameters; and wherein the stent is formed from a single piece of material.

Claim 43. (*Previously Presented*) The stent of claim 42, wherein each annular element comprises a plurality of alternating struts and apices connected to each other to form a substantially annular configuration.

Claim 44. (*Previously Presented*) The stent of claim 43, wherein the stent further includes connecting members that are connected to the apices of the adjacent annular members.

Claim 45. (*Previously Presented*) The stent of claim 44 wherein the diameter of the stent increases from a first diameter at the first end to a second greater diameter at the second end.

Claim 46. (*Cancelled*)

Claim 47. (*Currently Amended*) A stent having a first end, an opposing second end, and a

*Application No. 09/934310*  
*Page 7*

*Amendment*  
*Attorney Docket No. S63.2N-8429-US04*

longitudinal length, the stent comprising:

a plurality of annular elements including an end-most annular element at the first end and an end-most annular element at the second end, each annular element having a compressed state and an expanded state; and  
at least a portion of the stent having a tapered configuration in the expanded state;  
the tapered configuration defining a change in diameter between a portion of the stent closer to the first end and a portion of the stent closer to the second end, at least some of the tapered configuration occurring along a portion of the longitudinal length where the annular elements are of substantially equal width;  
wherein the end-most annular element at the first end has a different degree of flexibility and has a different diameter than the end-most annular element at the second end; and wherein the stent is formed from a tube.

Claim 48. *(Previously Presented)* A stent having a first end, an opposing second end, and a longitudinal length, the stent having a compressed state and an expanded state, the stent comprising:

a plurality of interconnected annular elements, the interconnected annular elements are connected by a plurality of connector elements, each connector element comprising at least one bent region, adjacent annular elements defining a flow path through the stent, at least a portion of the flow path of the stent having a tapered configuration in the expanded state,  
the tapered configuration defining a relative difference in diameter between a portion of the stent closer to the first end and a portion of the stent closer to the second end, at least some of the tapered configuration occurring along a portion of

*Application No. 09/934310*  
*Page 8*

*Amendment*  
*Attorney Docket No. S63.2N-8429-US04*

the longitudinal length where the annular elements are of substantially equal  
width;

the first and second ends have different degrees of flexibility and have different  
diameters, the stent being cut from a tube.

Claim 49. (*Cancelled*)